

Message Text

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ACTION L-02

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARA-06 SS-15 EUR-12 SCA-01 CIAE-00

INR-05 NSAE-00 RSC-01 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INRE-00 JUSE-00

SEC-01 SSO-00 /049 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8832

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 4733

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, CS

SUBJECT: LATEST DEVELOPMENT IN VESCO AFFAIR

1. IN AN OPEN LETTER TO LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT ALFONSO CARRO THAT WAS PUBLISHED DECEMBER 11, JULIO RODRIGUEZ, ASSISTANT DIRECOTR OF "LA REPUBLICA," SPECIFIED UN DEPUTY SIGURD KOBERG AS THE DEPUTY THAT HAD OFFERED HIM A HIGH POST ON THE STAFF OF THE NEWSPAPER "EXCELSION." RODRIGUEZ' LETTER WAS WRITTEN IN RESPONSE TO AN ASSEMBLY DEMAND ON DECEMBER 10 THAT "LA REPUBLICA'S" DIRECTOR. RODRIGO MADRIGAL, NAME THE DEPUTY WHOM HE HAD CHARGED, IN HIS ANTI-VESCO SPEECH LATE LAST WEEK, TRIED TO HIRE RODRIGUEZ ON BEHALF OF VESCO. RODRIGUEZ SAID IN HIS LETTER THA KOBERG IN EARLY NOVEMBER HAD INVITED HIM TO HIS OFFICE WHERE HE PRESENTED 5 PROPOSALS FROM ROBERT VESCO. RODRIGUEZ SAID THESE WERE: (1) A HIGH POSITION IN "EXCELSIOR;" (2) TO MANAGE A LARGE PUBLIC RELATIONS AGENCY; (3) TO SET HIM UP IN A BUSINESS; (4) TO CONCEIVE AND EXECUTE A PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN, BOTH IN COSTA RICA AND ABROAD, TO IMPROVE VESCO'S IMAGE; JTB(5) TO WRITE THE LIFE OF VESCO. RODRIGUEZ GAVE HIS OATH THAT THESE PROPOSALS WERE MADE BY KOBERG IN THE NAME OF VESCO. RODRIGUEZ ALSO MENTIONED OTHER ASPECTS OF THE NOVEMBER CONVERSATION. HE SAID THAT KOBERG TOLK HIM HE HAD UNSUCCESSFULLY TRIED TO GET UN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

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TREJOS ESCALANTE TO ACCEPT VESCO MONEY AND THEN VESCO

WANTED TO FINANCE THE UN'S CAMPAIGN DEBT ON THE
CONDITION THAT THE UN PARTY BE HEADED BY GUILLERMO
RAMIREZ JIMENEZ.

3. KOBERG'S UNCONVINCING DEFENSE IN THE ASSEMBLY YESTERDAY
(DEC.11) WAS TO CATEGORICALLY DENY THAT HE HAD MADE THE OFFERS TO
RODRIGUEZ AND ESTABLISH THE MATTER AS HIS WORD AGAINST RODRIZUEZ.

4. COMMENT: AS THE ASSEMBLY ADJOURNED, AT LEAST
FOR THE HOLIDAYS, ON DECEMBER 11 AFTER PASSING THE
FAMILY ASSISTANCE BILL, THIS ISSUE WILL NOT HAVE ANY IMMEDIATE
POLITICAL FALL-OUT OTHER THAN A FEW DAYS OF PRESS PLAY.
IT MAY BE COMBIND WITH OTHER ASSEMBLY ITEMS HOWEVER
IN JANUARY WHEN IT NOW APPEARS THE ASSEMBLY WILL BE
CALLED BACK INTO EXTRAORDINARY SESSION TO DEBATE
THE CONSUMER BILL.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, ALLEGATIONS, JOURNALISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SANJO04733
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740361-0777
From: SAN JOSE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741240/aaaabhuo.tel
Line Count: 78
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION L
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 SEP 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <18 MAR 2003 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LATEST DEVELOPMENT IN VESCO AFFAIR
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, CS, (VESCO, ROBERT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005